



## **Administrative Office of the Courts**

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*For Immediate Release*

### **Judicial Nominating Commission releases names of nominees to fill vacant District Court judgeship in Knott and Magoffin counties**

FRANKFORT, Ky., Feb. 3, 2005 — The Judicial Nominating Commission, led by Chief Justice Joseph E. Lambert, met today at the Magoffin County Justice Center in Salyersville to choose nominees to replace Judge Kimberly Childers whose election to circuit judge was certified Nov. 22 by the State Board of Elections. The vacant District Court judgeship serves the 36th Judicial District, which is comprised of Knott and Magoffin counties. Three nominees were named to fill this vacancy: Salyersville attorneys Jeffery N. Lovely and Dennis Bruce Prater, and Hindman attorney Bobby Doyle Williams.

#### **Jeffery N. Lovely**

Lovely holds a juris doctor from the University of Akron School of Law and a bachelor's degree from Alice Lloyd College. He currently has a general practice of law in Salyersville that handles domestic cases, probate, real estate, personal injury, bankruptcy, appeals and collections. He also serves as assistant Magoffin County attorney.

#### **Dennis Bruce Prater**

Prater practices law in Salyersville where he is an associate with Martin Law Offices, PSC. His practice primarily consists of personal injury, workers' compensation and Social Security cases. He also serves as assistant commonwealth's attorney for Knott and Magoffin counties, and attorney for the Magoffin County Board of Education. He holds a juris doctor from the Northern Kentucky University Chase College of Law and a bachelor's degree from Eastern Kentucky University.

#### **Bobby Doyle Williams**

Williams practices criminal, civil and administrative law in Hindman. He earned both a bachelor's degree and law degree from the University of Kentucky.

#### **Judicial Nominating Process**

When a judicial vacancy occurs, the executive secretary of the Judicial Nominating Commission publishes a notice of vacancy in the judicial circuit or the judicial district affected. Attorneys can recommend someone or nominate themselves. The names of the applicants are not released. Once nominations occur, the individuals interested in the position return a questionnaire to the Office of Chief Justice. Chief Justice Lambert then meets with the Judicial Nominating Commission to

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choose three nominees. Because the Kentucky Constitution requires that three names be submitted to the governor, in some cases the commission submits an attorney's name even though the attorney did not apply. A letter naming the three nominees is sent to Gov. Ernie Fletcher for review. When the governor appoints a replacement, his office makes the announcement.

**District Court**

District Court is a court of limited jurisdiction which hears civil cases involving \$4,000 or less, juvenile matters, city and county ordinances, misdemeanors, cases relating to domestic violence and abuse, guardianships for disabled people, traffic offenses, probate of wills and felony preliminary hearings. The Small Claims Division is part of District Court's jurisdiction and informally handles matters with a value of \$1,500 or less. The Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort, Ky., supports the activities of more than 3,400 Kentucky Court of Justice employees, including the elected offices of justices, judges and circuit court clerks.

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